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APR - 9 2004

**In the United States Patent and Trademark Office****OFFICIAL**

Applicants: Dodge et al.  
Serial No.: 10/022,329  
Confirmation No: 4952  
Filed: 12/14/2001  
For: High capacity and high rate  
absorbent composite.

Docket 16,184  
TC/A.U.: 3761  
Examiner: Michele M. Kidwell  
Date: April 9, 2004

Mail Stop AF  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**Amendment After Final Rejection Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116**

Sir:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 and in response to the Office Action in which the Examiner **finally rejected** claims 1 - 22 and which was mailed on January 28, 2004, the following amendments and remarks are submitted for your consideration. These amendments and remarks are offered in order to either reduce or, at the least more clearly define, the differences between the Applicants' position and that of the Examiner.

**Summary of Telephone Interview** with Examiner Kidwell begins on page 2 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 3 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 5 of this paper.

Appl. No. 10/022,329  
Resp. dated April 9, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of Jan. 28, 2004

**Summary of Telephone Interview**

On March 30, 2004 Applicant's undersigned attorney and Attorney Nathan Hendon called Examiner Kidwell regarding the interview requested by the Applicant's attorney on March 26, 2004. Applicant's attorney and the Examiner agreed that there was a difference in interpretation between the Examiner and the Applicant as to the meaning of "Z-directionally oriented web" as recited in claims 1, 10, 18 and 22 of the present invention.

Applicant's attorney and the Examiner discussed the proposed amended claims that the Applicant's attorney submitted along with the Request For Interview (i.e., the same amended claims as present beginning at page 3 of this paper). In pertinent part, claims 1, 10, 18 and 22 are amended to describe the material as having a "web of Z-directionally oriented fibers." Upon review of these amended claims, the Examiner agreed that such amended claims seem to overcome the rejections of the claims based on a Z-direction particle size distribution gradient.